

businesses, and industries around the world. Earthlink Network has developed a loyal following by harnessing the power of the Internet, and presenting it to consumers in an understandable and user-friendly format. For their dedication to quality and their innovations in the access provider industry, I ask my colleagues here today to join me in saluting the excellence of Earthlink Network, and in congratulating them on their 500,000th customer.

#### DRUG FREE BORDERS ACT

### HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 1998

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to salute all of my colleagues who joined me last night in supporting the Drug Free Borders Act. I would especially like to commend Congressman PHILIP CRANE (R-IL) for his leadership in introducing this legislation and following through with its rapid progression.

The Drug Free Borders Act plays an important role in our renewed efforts to win the War on Drugs by authorizing an additional \$233 million for the U.S. Customs Service. This legislation also calls for 1,745 more Customs inspectors and special agents, as well as new drug-screening technologies to assist in existing interdiction efforts.

As a resident of the Southern California region bordering Mexico, I am well-aware of the issues that surround the importation of narcotics. As the Congressional Representative for the 48th District of California, I know that our efforts are best directed at strengthening the security at our ports of entry in order to curb this disturbing practice.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday's passage of the Drug Free Borders Act is one more sign of this Congress' commitment to winning the War on Drugs. I applaud my colleagues and urge them to persist with this battle.

#### CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL

### HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, May 20, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

#### REFORMING CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL

One of the biggest changes I have seen during my years in Congress is an explosion in the number of complex issues Members of Congress are called upon to consider. Fortunately, Members have a host of resources on which they can rely for information, but these are no substitute for a Member's personal observations and experience. To get the broadest possible exposure to issues before Congress, Members must sometimes travel.

Congressional travel is frequently viewed with skepticism by the public, who worry that Members travel too often at too great an expense, with more emphasis on recreation than substance. They also voice concern about trips paid for by special-interest groups who are trying to influence the legis-

lative process. Congress has in recent years placed greater restrictions on travel, but occasional reports of abuses continue to raise the public's ire, with the unfortunate effect of discouraging some legitimate and useful congressional travel. Many Members do not travel at all because they fear the political consequences from being accused of taking a junket. I recently introduced a travel reform package which seeks to address some of the problems with congressional travel while enhancing its benefits to Congress and the public.

Reasons for travel: Domestic and foreign travel can greatly enhance a Member's knowledge, improving the quality of legislation and congressional oversight. In our system of government, Congress has the power of the purse. With this power to spend money comes the equally important responsibility to ensure that it is well-spent; and direct, personal oversight by Members of Congress is essential. Some congressional trips save taxpayer dollars by exposing wasteful programs both at home and abroad. Travel can improve a Member's understanding of the impact government policies have on a particular region or group of citizens and can also increase the public's knowledge of issues before Congress.

Foreign travel increases the expertise of Members on programs and issues that commit significant United States resources abroad, from programs to promote U.S. exports to overseas military deployments to food aid for developing nations. Travel also alerts Members to foreign trade opportunities which can directly benefit constituents in their home districts. Moreover, Members can advance our national interests: because they do not represent the President directly, sometimes they can say things that U.S. diplomats cannot. It is ironic that there are strong pressures against foreign congressional travel at the very time that America's security and economic interests are broader and more complex than ever.

Problems: The purpose of some congressional travel, however, is dubious. Particularly troublesome is travel paid for by groups who have a direct interest in legislation before Congress. Some groups, for example, will invite Members and staff to attend seminars or conferences at resorts or other appealing locations. Though these meetings are ostensibly to explore important issues, most are really aimed at advancing a specific point of view and gaining access for lobbyists to key Members and staff. These sorts of trips create at the very least the perception that Members of Congress are accepting nice trips in exchange for their votes. While I think this sort of gross exchange of votes for favors is rare, these trips do allow special interests to have greater access to Members of Congress, and with access often comes influence.

There are also questions about whether Members travel too lavishly and at too great an expense. Many congressional trips involve the use of military aircraft, which is sometimes justified. In addition, Members' spouses sometimes accompany them on trips, even though there may not be in all cases a legitimate reason for them to do so.

Reforms needed: Congress can do a better job of ensuring that travel serves legitimate purposes. Recent reforms have been helpful. In 1995, for example, the House enacted a gift ban which required Members and staff to disclose any travel paid for by private funds and emphasized that trips must relate to the official business of the House. But loopholes remain in the rules. In an effort to improve accountability in congressional travel, I recently introduced a travel reform resolution which would:

*Improve reporting requirements:* The House currently requires Members and staff to file

reports for certain types of travel. These reports often include the source of funds paying for travel, and an estimate of the cost of transportation, food, lodging, and other expenses. My proposal would require reports to also include a detailed itinerary and policy findings and recommendations; more information on private sources who fund trips; estimates of the costs of travel provided by a foreign government; and, if transportation is provided by the Department of Defense, an estimate of the cost equivalent commercial transportation.

*Make travel records more accessible to the public:* Currently, only reports for government-funded foreign travel are made widely available to the public. My proposal would require the House to publish in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and on the Internet a compilation of all travel reports for each calendar quarter, as well as an annual summary of all House travel.

*Ethics Committee approval for privately-funded trips:* Under my proposal, travel funded by private sources would require advance authorization from the House Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee would have to examine whether the person or group paying for the trip has a direct interest in legislation before Congress, and whether acceptance of the trip would have an adverse impact on the integrity of the legislative process.

*Restrict perks:* My proposal would prohibit Members and staff from accepting first-class airfare. Meals and lodging in excess of the federal employee per-diem rate would also be prohibited unless previously authorized by the House Ethics Committee. Moreover, travel by spouses or family members would be limited.

*Conclusion:* I firmly believe that when congressional travel is done right, it can greatly benefit Members of Congress and the citizens they represent. The question is not whether to abolish congressional travel, but how to get rid of frivolous travel while maintaining the worthwhile. My hope is that by putting in place stronger safeguards against travel abuses, good, substantive congressional travel will enjoy the support of Members and the public.

#### CONGRESSIONAL SENIOR CITIZEN INTERN PROGRAM

### HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, each year during the month of May our nation celebrates National Senior Citizen Month. All throughout May, various communities around the nation celebrate the diverse contributions of their senior citizens. In recognition and in conjunction with National Senior Citizen month, senior citizens from across the United States are gathering on Capitol Hill to participate in the annual Congressional Senior Citizen Intern Program.

The annual senior intern program provides our nation's senior citizens with a firsthand look at their government in action. While participating as interns in Washington, D.C., they attend meetings, issue forums, and workshops on topics which impact the elderly community in particular. The Senior Citizen Intern Program also allows its participants a chance to engage their congressional leaders, members

of the presidential cabinet, and other policy-makers in extensive dialogue about the legislative process. I am extremely honored to salute Mrs. Gussie Jones, who has been selected as my Congressional Senior Citizen Intern. Mrs. Jones was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. A graduate of Case Western Reserve University, she is the type of person that my district is proud to have produced. Not only has Mrs. Jones handled the responsibilities associated with being a mother, grandmother and most recently being a great grandmother, but she is also a political activist and public speaker whose words of wisdom are well sought after in the Cleveland area. She has on many occasions represented me at various functions.

Mr. Speaker, for 32 years Mrs. Jones dedicated her career to being an assistant manager in the General Services Department and a member of the Ohio Bell Speakers Bureau. Her affiliations include the Inner Church Council, the Executive Board #1 of the Eliza Bryant Home for the Aged, the League of Women Voters, and the National Council of Negro Women. She also shares an affiliation with the Tau Gamma Delta Sorority Iota Chapter.

In particular Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Jones is very involved in the church environment. She is a very active member of both African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church. In addition to serving as administrative assistant to her Pastor and Presiding Elder, Mrs. Jones is the Director of Home Mission of A.M.E. Zion Church Conference, Secretary for the Cleveland District Connection, Executive Secretary of the Connectional Claims Committee, Member of the Home Mission Board, and the Stewardess Board #2. She is also the Chairperson of the Life Members Council for the Missionary Society, Chairperson of the Scholarship Fund Committee, and an honorary member and narrator of the Chancel Choir.

Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in honoring Mrs. Gussie Jones. She is an exceptional Christian woman who serves her community well. I am certain that Mrs. Jones will do an outstanding job as a Congressional Senior Citizen Intern. I want to congratulate her and express my appreciation for her participation in this very important program.

#### HONORING HOWELL CARNEGIE LIBRARY

#### HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 20, 1998*

Mrs. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate the Howell Carnegie Library, which will receive a Michigan Historical Marker on May 17, 1998.

The Howell library originated as the Ladies Library Association in 1875. That year, the ladies began offering books for lending. In 1902, this service grew to such lengths that a need developed for a town library. With the financial help of steel entrepreneur Andrew Carnegie, Detroit architect Elijah E. Meyers, who in previous years designed Michigan's Capital, designed the Neoclassical library with fieldstones collected throughout the country on land donated by the four sons of Howell pioneer William McPherson.

Reading is one of life's greatest pleasures and the knowledge gained through libraries is critical to maintaining our great democracy. With this dedication, we need to honor not only this important structure but the people who were so committed to this important community service many years ago. From A.G. Kuehnle, a Howell native who hand built the library; to Andrew Carnegie, who funded over 2,500 free public libraries throughout the English-speaking world; to the people of Howell who established and supported the library throughout the years, this is an example of what can happen when dedicated people come together to meet the needs of the community. The Howell Carnegie Library is an important landmark and I am pleased it is getting the recognition it deserves.

#### COMMEMORATION OF SECOND AN- NIVERSARY OF THE BROOKLYN CHINESE-AMERICAN ASSOCIA- TION

#### HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 20, 1998*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association on their second anniversary. This celebration is due to two years of community outreach. This organization began as a group of concerned citizens who wanted to better their community. Despite lack of funding and resources, the group managed to become an organized entity providing an array of vital services to the community.

The Brooklyn Chinese-American Association provides essential services in the areas of health, service, and education. They conduct a variety of health related workshops and provide medical check-ups, free eye-exams, blood pressure monitoring, and yearly flu shots. The organization also renders services to people of all ages from providing day care to supporting youth and senior citizen cultural activities. Educational programs such as citizenship classes, language skills, and music and dancing classes are also included in this multi-human service center. Enough cannot be said of the many services this organization provides to the community.

Despite the lack of government funding and manpower, the organization has already enrolled more than 1,600 members and serves more than 150 people per day. In its efforts to improve the overall quality of life, the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association has maintained ties with their local elected and public officials. Through town meetings and voter registration drives, the center has made efforts to increase the political participation of the community.

This organization has truly evolved in a short period of time to become integral to the community. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in commemorating the efforts of the many who have struggled to make the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association what it is today. Let this organization be held as a prime example of how much can be accomplished when citizens care enough to make a change in their community.

#### TRIBUTE TO MRS. VALENTINA UMANETS

#### HON. JACK METCALF

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 20, 1998*

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a constituent of mine, Mrs. Valentina Umanets of Bellingham, Washington. Valentina passed away at her home on Friday, May 15th 1998. Valentina was instrumental to the Sister Cities agreement between Bellingham, Washington in my district and Nakhodka in eastern Russia.

In 1989, long before Perestroika allowed for the openness that is now sweeping across Russia, Valentina worked to bring about the Sister City agreement. She worked as the central staff member for the City of Nakhodka on this agreement. In 1993, Valentina immigrated to the United States at the request of Western Washington University and the City of Bellingham to enhance the Sister City program. Because of Valentina's hard work on this project, Bellingham and Nakhodka now have a vibrant Sister City agreement that has flourished in recent years with many valuable exchanges between the local governments, businesses and the citizens of these two communities.

Valentina worked as a Professor of Russian at Western Washington University, and had recently completed work on a new text book for teaching the Russian language. She was loved by her students, and her home always had visitors from either the University or the many Russian immigrants that call Bellingham and Whatcom County home. She was always willing to help those in the community that were in need of assistance with a government agency, a school or those that just needed something translated.

She also held events at the University and parties at her home to celebrate the rich Russian culture. Most recently, Valentina organized "An Evening of Russian Romance" at the University which featured Russian dance and music. The food for the evening was carefully prepared in Valentina's kitchen by her students and friends, but always under her watchful eye. Her home would be open each New Years Eve for a Russian celebration of one of the big holidays in Russia. On March 8th of each year, Valentina would again play host to a party in celebration of Womens Day, again an event of great importance in Russia.

Several American men in the Bellingham area, including a member of my staff, have married Russian women, and Valentina was often of great help for these couples as they worked to overcome cultural differences. She became a "den mother" of sorts to these women that were so far from home and their own mothers. Valentina was a very happy, caring person.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of both Bellingham and Nakhodka have suffered a great loss with the passing of Valentina. She has started a wonderful program between these two cities, and has kept it going to the point that it will continue to prosper without her. But to those that have already made friends across the vast Pacific or to those that will in the future, a great deal of thanks is owed to Valentina Umanets.

Mr. Speaker, Valentina is survived by her husband Eugene of Bellingham; her daughter